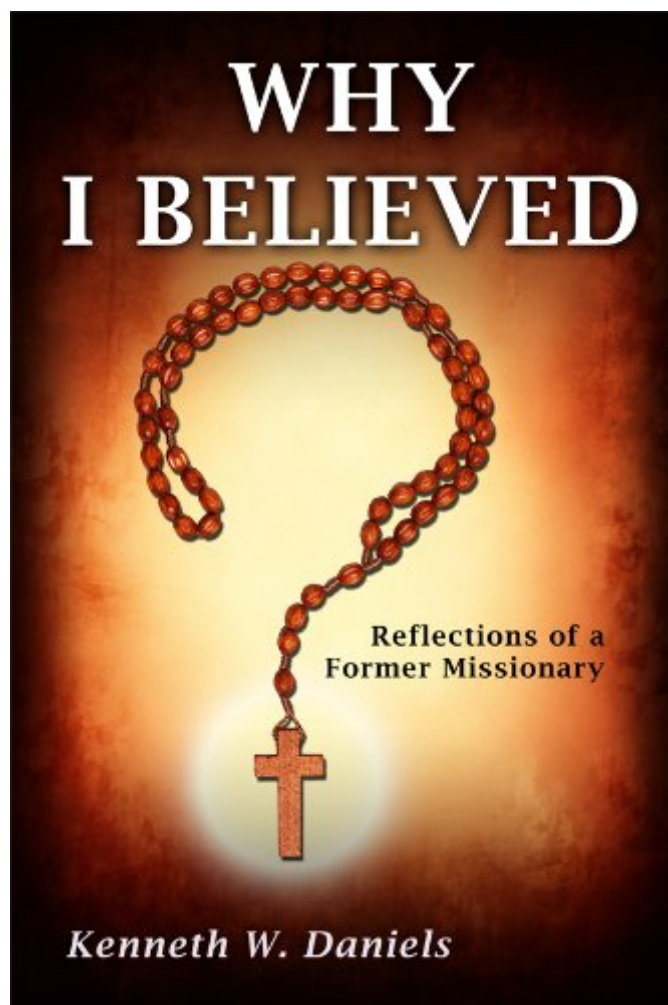


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Why I Believed: Reflections Of A Former Missionary



Synopsis

This is a story of a true Christian who believed for nearly three decades, having grown up the son of evangelical missionary parents, later becoming a missionary himself. Yet he slowly lost his faith and now no longer holds it. In this part-autobiography, part-exposé, Ken traces his journey from evangelical missionary to secular humanist while remaining part of a committed Christian family. He looks back at a number of reasons he remained a believer for over a decade after his initial doubts began at university, critically evaluating each one in a separate chapter. Whether or not you agree with Ken's conclusions, you will find his journey and his reasons for taking it fascinating and informative. You will end up better understanding, if not appreciating, the mind of apostates whose desire is to follow the evidence wherever it leads.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I bought this book as I was interested in the process that would lead someone to abandon their faith and this author seemed genuine. The book is definitely thought provoking and although the author tries hard not to come across as only explaining why he lost his faith by the time you are half-way

through you can feel that the tone is changing and he questions how anyone could continue believing knowing what he knows. I think many things he brings up and questions are legitimate but I also believe that even after reading the book, while questioning certain things you might believe, it doesn't really close the door on the Christian faith.

Like another reviewer, I am still reading the book. As someone who was brought up with little to no religion, I'm a bit taken aback in reading Mr. Daniels' book and a comparable one by Dan Barker by the depth of involvement individuals have in Christianity. Mr. Daniels delves into his critique of religion with that completely in mind. As another reviewer stated, he provides numerous references for anyone wanting to read further on topics he covers. I fully agree with a number of reviewers on the author's sincerity and kindness in the treatment of his subject. A very moderate voice of understanding, yet a strong commentary on the fallacies of religious belief. Hey, I'm all for anyone believing in whatever makes him or her a better person. But in the search for truth, I'll settle along with Mr. Daniels on science, logic, and reason.

I divided this book into three parts. The first part contains Ken's thoughts and processes that document his journey from missionary evangelical to non-believer. I found this part to be the best part of the book. Much of what Ken went through strikes a common cord. The second part of the book discusses the apologetics surrounding several controversial areas of the bible. Ken tried to tie this to his faith, but I found this section to be tedious and not very useful to me. I would have preferred less debate and more on how these topics fit into Ken's deconversion timeline. The final part (actually the last chapter) had headings that showed great promise. But, unfortunately, there was not enough meat. This final chapter provides a tiny bit of answers that many of us would find useful. These headings include "Are you happier now than before?", "Do you ever doubt your doubts?", and "How do you relate to your wife and family?". Those of us who are still searching are hungry not just for the apologetics, but how changes in our faith and beliefs could harm our family. Therefore, I would have preferred a lot more meat in this final part. Overall, I think this is a good read. I especially appreciated the window into Ken's heart during his journey. I wish he would have reduced the apologetics part. I also wish he would have expanded the final chapter with more relationship issues. Finally, I really wish his wife would have added a chapter on how Ken's journey affected her and how she dealt with her husband's deconversion.

I ordered this on recommendation from a fellow non-religious person, wanting to see if I could

interest my son to read it. He can't understand why I'm not a christian and this book is written by a very credible author who knows the jargon and mind control of evangelical upbringing.

In a gentle style, slowly revealing both his exceptional commitment to his faith, and his journey into what all religions hate most ... apostasy, Ken presents his life journey. This is the first book I would recommend for those wishing to examine "faith" issues with a minimum of rancor or bombast: It is virtually not there. How sad, almost without exception, missionaries, pastors, and those who have sacrificed so much to serve their God meet something like this as a first response: "Impossible, then you never truly believed." Given the extent of the hypocrisy within the church, this should come as no surprise. I dare you to dam him to hell after you have read his book, or ever again never doubt the certainties of a faith which you know down deep may be resting on the egg shells of hollow beliefs. His clearly rested on the deepest of foundations. For those living lives of integrity to their faith ... your heart may weep for such as these, seemingly cursed to take a different path, after clearly "having tasted," but then after even decades, departed the "faith once delivered." (Hebrews 6:4) His book makes what doesn't compute, add up. AN UNEXAMINED FAITH IS RARELY A FAITH WORTH HOLDING.

I read this book about 2 years ago, and again one year ago, and think about it from time to time. It is a brilliant and thoughtful description of one mans' quest for some sort of truth. Daniels was a true believer most of his life, I had it easy. I was a born again believer for about 3 weeks. Then my church had a 'Stand Up For America' day, when they convinced the local National Guard to bring every malignant weapon they had and to park them in the church yard. This was in the middle of the Viet Nam war. I quickly concluded that they were all nuts and have never looked back. Mr Daniels had to learn two new languages and committed himself to life in a remote African village with his family. His life was his religion. Yet he gave it up, because he could no longer believe. His description of why he did this is eloquent and shows his innate kindly nature. I wish him the best and hope more people will read this fine book.

Ken uses poignant examples and lucid language to describe what steeped-from-birth Evangelicals have to go through to slay their dragons. All stages of Nietzsche's camel, lion, and child are here. Ken's brief paragraphs of optimism at the end show him becoming the child. I wholeheartedly recommend this to any Christian of any stripe and to any non-Christians who may love them. It is really, really, really hard to leave the fold. It is an existential battle and Ken encourages readers

boldly, yet with copious amounts of empathy. Thanks for writing this, Ken.

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